

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

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1. A medical catheter assembly comprising:
 - (a) a medical catheter, said medical catheter having a proximal end, a distal end and a longitudinal bore, said distal end being shaped to define an internal bolster; and
 - (b) an inner sleeve, said inner sleeve having a proximal end and a distal end, at least a portion of said inner sleeve being removably disposed within said longitudinal bore of said medical catheter.
2. The medical catheter assembly as claimed in claim 1 further comprising a body adapted for use as an external bolster, said medical catheter being secured to said body.
3. The medical catheter assembly as claimed in claim 1 wherein said inner sleeve is sized to form a seal with the inside surface of said medical catheter.
4. The medical catheter assembly as claimed in claim 1 wherein said inner sleeve is sized so as not to form a seal with the inside surface of said medical catheter, said medical catheter assembly further comprising a ring, said ring being mounted around said inner sleeve and forming a seal with the inside surface of said medical catheter.
5. The medical catheter assembly as claimed in claim 1 wherein said inner sleeve is sized to extend at least the entire length of said longitudinal bore of said medical catheter.
6. The medical catheter assembly as claimed in claim 1 wherein said inner sleeve has an open proximal end, an open distal end and a longitudinal bore extending from said open proximal end to said open distal end.

7. The medical catheter assembly as claimed in claim 1 wherein said inner sleeve has an open proximal end, a closed distal end, a side port and a channel extending from said open proximal end to said side port.

8. The medical catheter assembly as claimed in claim 7 wherein said closed distal end is rounded.

9. The medical catheter assembly as claimed in claim 1 further comprising a fitting, said fitting having an open proximal end and an open distal end, said open distal end of said fitting being coupled to said proximal end of said inner sleeve in such a way as to permit materials to pass between said fitting and said inner sleeve.

10. The medical catheter assembly as claimed in claim 9 wherein said open proximal end of said fitting is adapted to receive a tube.

11. The medical catheter assembly as claimed in claim 9 wherein said open proximal end of said fitting is adapted to receive a medical luer.

12. The medical catheter assembly as claimed in claim 11 wherein said open proximal end of said fitting is externally threaded to matingly engage an internally threaded sleeve surrounding a medical luer.

13. The medical catheter assembly as claimed in claim 9 further comprising a plug, said plug being removably insertable into said open proximal end of said fitting to seal shut said fitting.

14. The medical catheter assembly as claimed in claim 13 wherein said plug is connected to said fitting by a strap.

15. The medical catheter assembly as claimed in claim 1 further comprising a body, said body having a base and a sleeve, said base having a transverse bore, said sleeve extending upwardly

from said base and having a longitudinal bore, said longitudinal bore of said sleeve being aligned with said transverse bore of said base, said proximal end of said medical catheter being inserted up through said transverse bore of said base and said longitudinal bore of said sleeve and then inverted over the top of said sleeve.

16. The medical catheter assembly as claimed in claim 15 further comprising a cap mounted on said sleeve and over the inverted proximal end of said medical catheter for securing the inverted proximal end of the medical catheter to said sleeve.

17. The medical catheter assembly as claimed in claim 16 wherein said cap has an opening, said opening being aligned with said longitudinal bore of said sleeve.

18. The medical catheter assembly as claimed in claim 16 further comprising a fitting mounted on said cap, said fitting having an open proximal end and an open distal end, said open distal end of said fitting being coupled to said proximal end of said inner sleeve in such a way as to permit materials to pass between said fitting and said inner sleeve.

19. The medical catheter assembly as claimed in claim 18 wherein said cap further comprises a collar, said distal end of said fitting being screwed into said collar.

20. The medical catheter assembly as claimed in claim 1 wherein said medical catheter is a gastrostomy feeding tube.

21. The medical catheter assembly as claimed in claim 15 wherein said sleeve further comprises a transverse slot, said transverse slot intersecting said longitudinal bore, said medical catheter assembly further comprising a clamp mounted on said base and movable within said transverse slot between a first position in which said clamp is adapted to transversely compress to

closure the medical catheter when the inner sleeve is removed therefrom and a second position in which said clamp is not adapted to transversely compress the medical catheter.

22. The medical catheter assembly as claimed in claim 21 wherein said medical catheter assembly is a low profile PEG device.

23. A medical catheter assembly comprising:

(a) a medical catheter, said medical catheter having a proximal end, a distal end and a longitudinal bore, said distal end being shaped to define an internal bolster; and

(b) a solid body, at least a portion of said solid body being removably disposed within said longitudinal bore of said medical catheter.

24. The medical catheter assembly as claimed in claim 23 further comprising a body adapted for use as an external bolster, said medical catheter being secured to said body.

25. The medical catheter assembly as claimed in claim 23 wherein said solid body is sized to form a seal with the inside surface of said medical catheter.

26. The medical catheter assembly as claimed in claim 25 wherein said solid body is sized to extend at least the entire length of said longitudinal bore of said medical catheter.

27. The medical catheter assembly as claimed in claim 23 further comprising a body, said body having a base and a sleeve, said base having a transverse bore, said sleeve extending upwardly from said base and having a longitudinal bore, said longitudinal bore of said sleeve being aligned with said transverse bore of said base, said proximal end of said medical catheter being inserted up through said transverse bore of said base and said longitudinal bore of said sleeve and then inverted over the top of said sleeve.

28. The medical catheter assembly as claimed in claim 23 wherein said medical catheter is a gastrostomy feeding tube.

29. A method of administering food and/or medications to a patient, said method comprising the steps of:

(a) implanting a medical catheter assembly in the patient, said medical catheter assembly comprising a feeding tube and an inner sleeve, said feeding tube having a longitudinal bore, a proximal end extending externally from the patient and a distal end anchored within the patient, said inner sleeve being removably disposed within said longitudinal bore of said feeding tube, said inner sleeve having a proximal end, a distal end and a longitudinal bore; and

(b) then, dispensing food and/or medications to the patient through said inner sleeve.

30. The method as claimed in claim 29 further comprising, after said dispensing step, the step of removing said inner sleeve from said feeding tube.

31. The method as claimed in claim 30 further comprising, after said removing step, the steps of re-introducing said inner sleeve into said feeding tube, dispensing food and/or medications to the patient through said re-introduced inner sleeve, and then removing said inner sleeve from said feeding tube when said dispensing is complete.

32. The method as claimed in claim 31 further comprising, after said removing step and before said re-introducing step, the step of cleaning said inner sleeve.

33. The method as claimed in claim 30 further comprising, after said removing step, the step of dispensing food and/or medications to the patient directly through said feeding tube.

34. A method of draining materials from a patient, said method comprising the steps of:

(a) implanting a medical catheter assembly in the patient, said medical catheter assembly comprising a drainage tube and an inner sleeve, said drainage tube having a longitudinal bore, a proximal end extending externally from the patient and a distal end anchored within the patient, said inner sleeve being removably disposed within said longitudinal bore of said drainage tube, said inner sleeve having a proximal end, a distal end and a longitudinal bore; and

(b) then, draining materials from the patient through said inner sleeve.

35. The method as claimed in claim 34 further comprising, after said draining step, the step of removing said inner sleeve from said drainage tube.

36. The method as claimed in claim 35 further comprising, after said removing step, the steps of re-introducing said inner sleeve into said drainage tube, draining materials from the patient through said re-introduced inner sleeve, and then removing said inner sleeve from said drainage tube when said draining is complete.

37. The method as claimed in claim 36 further comprising, after said removing step and before said re-introducing step, the step of cleaning said inner sleeve.

38. The method as claimed in claim 35 further comprising, after said removing step, the step of draining materials from the patient directly through said feeding tube.